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To: Education

HOUSE BILL NO. 582

1 AN ACT TO REQUIRE HOME SCHOOLED CHILDREN TO PARTICIPATE IN
 2 THE UNIFORM STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT TESTING PROGRAM; TO REQUIRE LOCAL
 3 SCHOOL DISTRICTS TO PROVIDE NOTICE OF THE TESTING REQUIREMENT TO
 4 PARENTS OF SUCH CHILDREN WHOSE GRADE LEVEL IS BEING TESTED DURING
 5 THAT SCHOOL YEAR AND TO ACCOMMODATE HOME SCHOOLED CHILDREN DURING
 6 THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE TESTS; TO REQUIRE THE STATE BOARD OF
 7 EDUCATION TO DEVELOP A LIST OF ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENTS THAT MAY BE
 8 TAKEN BY HOME SCHOOLED STUDENTS IN LIEU OF THEIR PARTICIPATION IN
 9 THE STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT PROGRAM; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

10 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

11 SECTION 1. (1) Except as otherwise provided in subsection
 12 (4) of this section, beginning with the 2000-2001 school year,
 13 each compulsory-school-age child who is being educated in a home
 14 instruction program shall participate in the uniform statewide
 15 assessment testing program required under Section 37-16-3 in order
 16 to verify that the student is performing at or above the minimum
 17 performance standards approved by the State Board of Education for
 18 the student's appropriate grade level. For the purposes of this
 19 section, "appropriate grade level" means the grade in which public
 20 school students typically are enrolled when such students are the
 21 same age as the child in the home instruction program and not the
 22 grade level at which the child in the home instruction program
 23 purportedly is performing.

24 (2) Each local school district shall provide notice of the

25 testing requirement established under this section to the parent,
26 guardian or custodian of each compulsory-school-age child in a
27 home instruction program who is the same age as the students
28 typically enrolled in a grade in which the uniform tests are being
29 administered during that school year. To assist the school
30 district in providing this notice, before September 30 of each
31 year, the school attendance officer shall provide a copy of the
32 certificate of enrollment for each compulsory-school-age child in
33 a home instruction program residing in the school district to the
34 school district superintendent. Based upon the age of the child
35 as reflected on the certificate of enrollment, the school district
36 promptly shall notify, in writing, the appropriate parents,
37 guardians and custodians of the testing requirements, the dates
38 and times that the tests will be administered in the school
39 district and the location to which a child in a home instruction
40 program must report to participate in the test. The notice also
41 must include a listing of those tests or assessment instruments
42 that the State Board of Education recognizes as alternative means
43 to verify that the student is performing at or above the minimum
44 performance standards approved by the State Board of Education for
45 the student's appropriate grade level.

46 (3) School districts shall provide appropriate
47 accommodations for the participation of the compulsory-school-age
48 children in home instruction programs in the uniform statewide
49 assessment testing program.

50 (4) The State Board of Education shall adopt a list of tests
51 and assessment instruments that the board recognizes as valid,
52 alternative means to establish the performance level of a student
53 in a home instruction program. A parent, guardian or custodian of
54 a compulsory-school-age child in a home instruction program may
55 submit documentation of the child's results on these tests or

56 assessments to the local school board in lieu of the child
57 participating in the statewide assessment program.

58 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from
59 and after July 1, 2000.